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BEST BET FOR BEST PICTURE?

DraftKings Sportsbook allows you to bet on the Oscars. 10

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What to look for as Sixers begin second half of season. 18-19

Justice Dept. has Mueller report. 6

SNOW JOB

Philly's crazy winter had another unexpected twist with a sudden heavy snowfall that snarled traffic and nearly shut down the city. 4-5

VSiN metro BET
Phillies prop bets you need to know. 16-17

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5 THINGS TO KNOW

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

SAM NEWHOUSE, REPORTER

If your kids didn't think they'd get to go sledding and build a snowman on a snow day, Jack Frost proved them wrong Wednesday. But the 4-5 inches of snow that fell on the Philadelphia region wasn't all fun and games for commuters who had to fight their way home and back through icy, wet, slushy conditions as the storm evolved from innocent snow to a wintry mix that turned deadly for a pair of motorists in South Jersey. Could this be the last snow of the season for Philly? Read all about it inside and on MetroPhilly.us.

Smollett charged with filing false police report

1 "Empire" actor Jussie Smollett was charged Wednesday night with disorderly conduct for filing a false police report. Smollett earlier in the day was labeled suspect in a criminal investigation by Chicago police for filing a false report stating he was attacked in a hate crime, a police spokesman said on Twitter on Wednesday. Smollett, 36, last month told police in Chicago that two men shouting racist and homophobic slurs had accosted him on the street and put a rope around his neck. Smollett, an openly gay African-American man, also plays a gay man on the show. "Jussie Smollett is now officially classified as a suspect in a criminal investigation by #ChicagoPolice for filing a false police report (Class 4 felony)," Chicago police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said in a statement on Twitter. "Detectives are currently presenting evidence before a Cook County Grand Jury."

Cohen gets two-month delay to report to prison

2 President Donald Trump's former personal lawyer Michael Cohen will now report to federal prison on May 6 after a judge granted him a two-month delay to allow him to recover from a surgical procedure, according to a court filing on Wednesday. Cohen's lawyers asked for a 60-day extension in a letter to U.S. District Court Judge William Pauley to allow Cohen to undergo "intensive post-surgical physical therapy" and to prepare for testimony before three congressional committees. "Mr. Cohen underwent serious shoulder surgery and this extra time allows Mr. Cohen to continue his physical therapy," Cohen's legal team said in an emailed statement. which he welcomes." Federal prosecutors in Manhattan, who are handling his criminal case, approved of the two-month delay, the letter said.

Wintry mix of snow, ice, and rain hits DC

3 Heavy snow fell in front of the White House and throughout the in Washington, DC. area on Wednesday, causing hazardous road conditions during morning rush hour as a wintry mix of snow, ice and rain hit the nation's capital.

GETTY IMAGES

Paltrow countersues Utah ski-collision foe — for $1

4 Oscar-winning actress Gwyneth Paltrow on Wednesday counter-sued a retired optometrist who has taken her to court over a 2016 ski slope collision in Utah, saying he caused the crash and was seeking to exploit her fame and fortune three years later. Paltrow, 46, seeks a symbolic $1 in damages from Terry Sanderson, 72, who sued her last month for $3.1 million in Summit County District Court in Utah over the Feb. 26, 2016, incident at Deer Valley Resort in Park City. "Resolution of this counter claim will demonstrate that Plaintiff [Sanderson] ran into Ms. Paltrow and nonetheless blamed her for it in an attempt to exploit her celebrity and wealth," attorneys for the actress wrote in the 18-page complaint. Sanderson announced his lawsuit against Paltrow at a news conference last month in Salt Lake City.

Viacom keeps cutting cord, will stream on fuboTV

5 Viacom Inc. said on Wednesday it will provide programming on fuboTV's live TV streaming service, part of an industry trend of cord-cutting that also has Viacom distributing content through "vitual pay-TV" providers Sling TV, DirectTV Now and Philo. New York-based fuboTV is a four-year-old streaming service that focused on soccer before expanding into other sports and carrying entertainment programming from networks such as FX and Showtime. Viacom will include content from its nine core media networks, which include Comedy Central, MTV and Nickelodeon, in fuboTV's base package, "fubo," which costs $44.99 per month. Additional Viacom channels will be available in the premier package, "fubo Extra,"for $49.99 per month. Disney, AT&T and Apple are expected to launch streaming services this year.

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Philadelphia Streets Department's salt dome prior to Wednesday's snowfall. COURTESY OF PHILADELPHIA STREETS DEPARTMENT

Fearsome snowstorm causes chaos in Philly area

Wednesday's snowy, slushy mess of a storm sparked school closures and snarled traffic in Philly and around the region.

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

The wild winter is not over yet.

While Philly was hit with arctic temps recently, the lack of snowfall had meant most city offices stayed open through the recent frigid polar vortex. But when the snow came Wednesday, folks ran for the hills.

Three to 5 inches of snow accumulated over the day, with flakes starting to fall around 10 a.m. Wednesday and intensifying through the afternoon. Many offices and institutions in the Philadelphia area and around the state were closed.

"This storm could bring with it a travel mess, and so I encourage everyone who can stay off the roads to do so tomorrow," said Gov. Tom Wolf. "Be sure to check your local weather and road conditions and heed the advice of local emergency responders and personnel, and, as always, check on your neighbors, especially the elderly."

As forecast by the National Weather Service Mt. Holly station, the storm began with snow, then changed to wintry mix before transitioning to rain in the afternoon to evening hours. But the change in precipitation made the storm even more of a slushy mess, with the evening commute snarled and sloppy, and low temps creating icy conditions in some areas.

With all that in mind, the Philadelphia Streets Department geared up early for the storm by "brining" major thoroughfares with a salty solution that is intended to keep snow from sticking to the pavement. In addition, the Department had 270 pieces of equipment and 35,000 tons of salt ready to go to begin salting operations once the snow started to fall.

"The cold ground will make it easy for wintry mix to accumulate and cause slippery travel. Sleet and rain can cause other hazardous conditions such as down trees and wires impacting traffic conditions," the Streets Department warned. While trash pickup is operating one day behind due to Presidents' Day, it was scheduled to continue as planned through Wednesday's snowstorm, the Department said.

"I encourage everyone who can stay off the roads [Thursday] to do so."
Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf

From 9 p.m. Wednesday on, the storm was expected to change to rain, but it was unclear how long it would last or if icy, snowy conditions would remain Thursday morning. Over the course of the day, however, temps were forecast to rise from 33 degrees to a high of 55.

Snow problems around Philly

As flakes first started falling around 10 a.m.,

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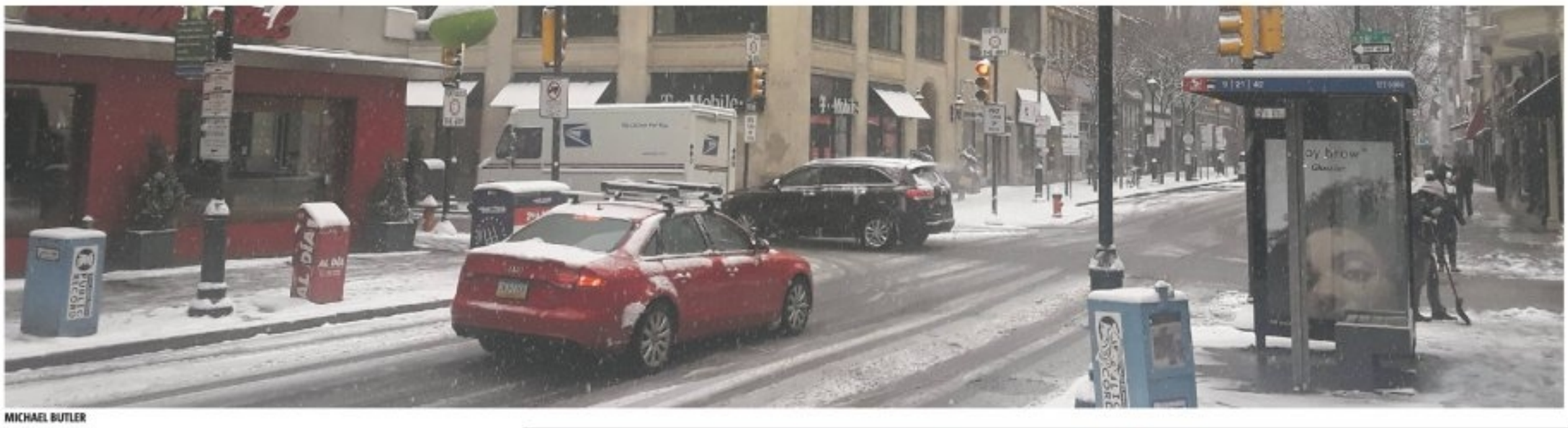


MICHAEL BUTLER

the city of Philadelphia announced government offices would be closing citywide at 1 p.m. Essential, emergency-related services, as well as 311 offices and the Philly Water Department's Customer Service Line, remained open.

In South Jersey, two people were killed in a multi-vehicle crash on Route 530 in Pemberton, N.J., in Burlington County around 12:30 p.m. Two others were reportedly injured.

Other storm-related effects around the city included:

Philadelphia International Airport canceled about 100 flights.

All Philadelphia public and Catholic schools were closed Wednesday.

All courts and offices of the Philadelphia Courts were closed due to the weather, but critical court services remained active. Jurors summoned for duty had their day of service rescheduled.

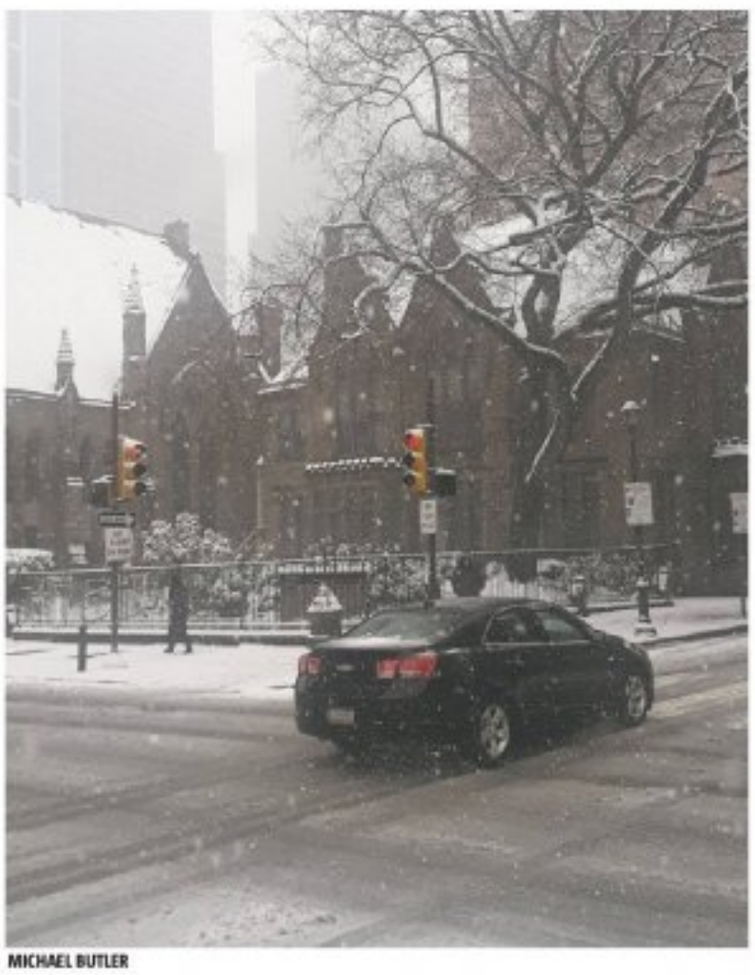
A Code Blue was put into effect through Thursday morning. If you see anyone suffering from homelessness outdoors during the cold, call 215-232-1984. A Code Blue also means that dogs are required to be brought indoors or into safe shelters.

All inmate visits to Philadelphia prisons were canceled.

All Montgomery County courts and offices were closed, as were Chester County Government facilities and courts.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced a commercial vehicle ban along highways where the snowfall was expected to be heaviest. Check 511Pa.com for specific updates.

PennDOT also said that 15 of its Driver License and Photo License Centers would be closed due to weather; five more were planned to open with a five-hour delay. Check dmv.pa.gov for details.



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Justice Department preparing to say it has received Robert Mueller report, AG next up

The special counsel's Russia report may finally be wrapping up.

Former Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Robert Mueller. GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. Department of Justice may announce as early as next week that Special Counsel Robert Mueller has given the attorney general his report on the federal Russia investigation, CNN said on Wednesday, citing unnamed sources.

After the expected announcement, U.S. Attorney General William Barr will review Mueller's findings and submit his own summary to Congress, CNN reported.

A Justice Department spokeswoman declined to comment on the CNN report. Peter Carr, a spokesman for Mueller, also declined to comment.

Democrats have been concerned that Barr, who has discretion over what is ultimately made public, will choose to limit disclosure, although the new attorney general has said he would seek to make public as much of Mueller's findings as he can.

Trump, responding to the CNN report on Wednesday, noted that decision would be up to Barr.

"That'll be totally up to the new attorney general," Trump told reporters at the White House as he prepared to meet Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz.

Mueller is investigating alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and possible collusion by President Donald Trump's campaign, as well as possible obstruction of justice by the Republican president.

Trump has denied any collusion and repeatedly slammed the Russia probe as a "witch hunt." Moscow has also denied any meddling. So far, 34 individuals and three companies have pleaded guilty, been indicted or otherwise swept up in the inquiry, including several former Trump advisers.

The report will not mark the end of legal scrutiny on Trump.

"That'll be totally up to the new attorney general."

President Trump

Newly empowered Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives have said they plan to use Mueller's court filings to build a picture of wrongdoing by Trump advisers that can provide the basis for hearings.

The Mueller probe has also spawned several investigations that are being handled by other offices and will carry on even after Mueller's work is done.

Under special counsel regulations, Mueller must submit a confidential report to the attorney general explaining his prosecutorial decisions at the conclusion of his work.

The attorney general, in turn, is required to inform the judiciary committees of Congress about Mueller's report in the form of "brief notifications, with an outline of the actions and the reasons for them."

How much ultimately becomes public is unclear.

Barr, who was confirmed by the Senate last week, said during his confirmation hearings that he would make public as many of Mueller's findings as he can but stopped short of promising to release the entire report.

REUTERS

Abuse victims demand to see pope, call for bishops to be fired

Victims of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy demanded on Wednesday to meet Pope Francis to press their call for the Church to apply a "zero tolerance" policy including the dismissal of bishops who covered up such offenses.

The 12 victims met with five Vatican officials a day before the start of an unprecedented conference on clerical abuse that aims to guide senior bishops on how best to tackle a problem that has decimated the Church's credibility.

All the survivors of abuse who took part in the meeting, which lasted more than two hours, said they were disappointed the pope did not attend, even though he was not scheduled to be there.

"We need to have a discussion with the man who makes the rules and has the power in this institution, and that's Pope Francis," said Peter Isely, an American from Milwaukee who was abused when he was a boy by a priest.

GETTY IMAGES

Isely said the discussion had become "a little bit confrontational, a little heated at times but polite."

The four-day conference is bringing together presidents of national Roman Catholic bishops conferences, Vatican officials, experts and heads of male and female religious orders. It takes place as the 1.3 billion-member Church still struggles to enact a concerted, coordinated and global effort to tackle a crisis that is now more than two decades old.

Scandals over sexual abuse of minors have deeply damaged the Church's credibility in the United States, Chile, Australia, Ireland and elsewhere. Billions of dollars have been paid in the U.S. alone in settlements.

"We made our demands for zero tolerance. We want the pope to write into universal law: zero tolerance for the cover-up of sex crimes. They can do it right now," Isely told reporters after the meeting with the officials, all of them clerics.

He and other victims said bishops who had covered up abuse should be dismissed from the priesthood, known as laicization, just like those who had committed the abuse itself.

One of the Vatican participants said the pope was never due to attend on Wednesday as he would see other victims of abuse during the conference. Victims who address the gathering will remain anonymous at their request. REUTERS

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Queen will be performing at Sunday's Oscars. ALL GETTY IMAGES

Queen, Lady Gaga bring Grammys vibe to Sunday's Oscars

The biggest night in cinema gets a boost from musical artists.

There won't be a host and Sunday's Oscars ceremony won't open with the traditional monologue in which celebrities and politicians are skewered.

Yet with rock band Queen, pop superstar Lady Gaga and two musicals in the race for Best Picture, the highest honors in the movie industry will have an unusually strong music vibe as the Oscars seek to regain television audiences.

British band Queen, featuring Adam Lambert as lead vocalist, will open the Feb. 24 show with a live performance celebrating the box-office success of Best Picture nominee "Bohemian Rhapsody," a representative of the band told Reuters.

Bette Midler, Jennifer Hudson, Jennifer Lopez and record producer Pharrell Williams are also set to attend or present, along with James Bond actor Daniel Craig, tennis champion Serena Williams, "Black Panther" star Chadwick Boseman and comedians Tina Fey and Amy Poehler.

Details have been scant about the first Academy Awards ceremony in 30 years to go ahead without a host, bringing a curiosity factor to the last and biggest awards show of the season. Comedian Kevin Hart withdrew from the host job in December after past homophobic tweets resurfaced.

"Hollywood is all about suspense," said Tom O'Neil, founder of awards website Goldderby.com.

One thing is certain: it won't be shorter. A pledge to broadcaster ABC to keep the show to three hours was wrecked last week when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences bowed to protests and scrapped plans to hand out four of the 24 Oscars during commercial breaks.

In 1989, the last time there was no host, the telecast opened with an 11-minute song-and-dance number featuring Rob Lowe and an actress dressed as Snow White that was widely derided.

Under pressure to deliver a compelling show for viewers after last year's TV audience hit an all-time low, producers have made the most of the Best Original Song contenders.

Lady Gaga and actor-director Bradley Cooper will perform a live duet of her hit song "Shallow" from their Best Picture contender "A Star Is Born," while Jennifer Hudson has been tapped to sing "Fight" from documentary "RBG."

Midler will do the honors for the "Mary Poppins Returns" song "The Place Where Lost Things Go" and country duo Gillian Welch and David Rawlings will perform "When a Cowboy Trades His Spurs for Wings."

"That is one of the places where the star wattage can make a difference," said Alison Willmore, critic and culture writer at BuzzFeed News.

"Lady Gaga is a music superstar and I would imagine her hardcore fans will be tuning in for her," Willmore added.

Organizers have not said whether rapper Kendrick Lamar will perform his Oscar-nominated song "All the Stars" from superhero movie "Black Panther."

Oscar producers told The New York Times that Serena Williams would be one of eight people from outside the world of entertainment who will appear to talk about what the Best Picture nominees mean to them.

Sunday's show is also expected to dispense with the segments between award handouts that in recent years have focused on pizza deliveries or surprising people on bus tours. REUTERS

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FINDING SOMETHING YOU THOUGHT YOU LOST

Everyone has that moment where they scramble around in the morning to find their keys, phone or wallet thinking that they had done the unthinkable and lost them for good. That feeling of dread takes hold and you think that you are in for a rough couple of days trying to piece your life back together. One of those moments happened to me today with my keys. I was so worried I had lost them and I looked and looked, and was convinced they were gone. That was until I realized they were in my pocket the entire time. Sometimes, these things are right underneath your nose.

— **Angie L.**, *Metro Boston reader*

Please remember to send your Humbles to **humble@metro.us**. These submissions can be acts of gratitude, positivity or kindness that you have seen throughout the day.

READER WRITE-INS:

PEOPLE WHO HOG OVERHEAD COMPARTMENTS ON PLANES

Let's get this straight. If there is a seat on a plane that has someone sitting in it, chances are they will most likely have a piece of luggage that they will need to fit in their overhead compartment. I'm so sick of taking a flight somewhere and having my assigned compartment filled with someone else's coat or whatever. Keep your stuff in your own assigned space! If you have your luggage stowed above you, keep your coat on your lap. This is the bed you made, now lie in it!

— **Steven**, *Metro US reader*

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Aries Talk to someone who understands your professional situation and can offer sound advice. You may crave change, but making a move without your ducks in a row will be stressful.

Taurus The more you put in, the more you will get out. Someone you've helped in the past will offer assistance that enables you to follow through with your plans.

Gemini Keep your life simple, follow the rules and make sure everything you say and do is by the book. Your reputation depends on your integrity.

Cancer You'll have some unusual ideas, but first check out the expense involved in acting upon them. A partner may be able to help you cut costs.

Leo Take time to check on someone you don't see often or who has been going through a difficult time. It will make you feel good and do wonders for the person you contact.

Virgo Participating in a networking function or social event will do you good and bring you in contact with someone who motivates you to pursue your dreams.

Libra A change to the way you handle your money will greatly help you. Problems at home will cause stress if you or someone you live with hasn't been honest regarding expenditures.

Scorpio Short trips will be informative and will open your eyes to a host of new ideas. Take the path that speaks to you and don't worry about being different. Follow your heart.

Sagittarius Keep busy doing things that will improve your physical strength and endurance. Take your health seriously and avoid people who tend to be undisciplined.

Capricorn Put your energy into fixing up your surroundings and taking care of personal matters. You'll accomplish a lot if you address concerns. Leave the past behind you and move forward.

Aquarius Accept the inevitable and examine the possibilities. If you look at the positive in every situation you face, you will discover a way to make personal gains.

Pisces Get involved in groups that share your beliefs and are working toward similar goals. What you contribute will put you in a leadership position. Romance is highlighted. EUGENIA LAST

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LIFESTYLE

DraftKings Sportsbook allows you to bet on the Oscars

You can legally wager on the Academy Awards this Sunday.

MATTHEW BURKE
matthew.burke@metro.us

With sports betting now legal in more and more states within the U.S., online sportsbooks are now targeting broader audiences. DraftKings Sportsbook, for instance, took thousands of bets a couple weeks back on how long Gladys Knight's Super Bowl National Anthem would last.

People now bet on everything under the sun, including politics (election results are a big one) and TV shows ("Who will be the first character to cry in the season finale of 'This Is Us'?").

The Academy Awards have always been a big pop culture betting opportunity and you can bet on who will win all of the awards right now at DraftKings Sportsbook. Just a note — you have to be physically within the state of New Jersey to bet. You do not have to be a New Jersey resident.

To bet, go to **Metro.us/oscars20** for a free $20 bet.

Odds to win Best Picture

- "Roma" -180
- "Green Book" +350
- "The Favourite" +900
- "BlacKkKlansman" +1500
- "A Star Is Born" +1600
- "Bohemian Rhapsody" +1800
- "Black Panther" +1800
- "Vice" +6600

Advice: What fun is betting the favorite ("Roma" at -180) when you can bet on "THE FAVOURITE" at +900!? If you're not familiar with betting lines, here's how this works: If you placed $100 on "The Favourite" to win at +900, you would win $900 if "The Favourite" pulls off the upset on Sunday! Of course, you don't have to bet that much money. At DraftKings Sportsbook, there is a $5 minimum. If you put down $5 on "The Favourite" to win Best Picture, you would net $45. Not a bad night!

Odds to win Best Actor

- Rami Malek ("Bohemian Rhapsody") -300
- Christian Bale ("Vice") +200
- Bradley Cooper ("A Star Is Born") +1400
- Viggo Mortensen ("Green Book") +2500
- Willem Dafoe ("At Eternity's Gate") +5000

Advice: Christian Bale is a good bet here. He won Best Supporting Actor in 2011 with "The Fighter" but has never won Best Actor. The Academy wouldn't mind sticking it to Dick Cheney, too.

Odds to win Best Actress

- Glenn Close ("The Wife") -500
- Olivia Coleman ("The Favourite") +400
- Lady Gaga ("A Star Is Born") +800
- Yalitza Aparicio ("Roma") +3300
- Melissa McCarthy ("Can You Ever Forgive Me?") +3300

Advice: This looks like a slam dunk for Glenn Close. She holds the actress record for most Oscar nominations without a win and a loss here would be cruel. The Academy desperately needs a feel-good moment on this show and giving Close the award would certainly do the trick.

You can also bet on fun Oscars prop bets like, "How many times will Donald Trump be mentioned onstage?" Right now the over–under is 1.5 times, and you've got to like that over, considering the Academy Awards is typically the largest congregation of outspoken liberals on the planet.

Some other fun ones are, "How long will the official ABC broadcast last?" (as the show almost always goes a good half-hour too long) and "Will any winners be bleeped during their acceptance speech?"

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"Black Panther" is leading the charge with Marvel's Oscar nominations. MARVEL STUDIOS

The Russo Brothers on the Oscars finally recognizing the superhero genre

"Black Panther" and "Avengers: Infinity War" have 10 nominations between them.

GREGORY WAKEMAN

The Oscars have been and always will be divisive.

Not only are the nominations roundly debated, even the eventual winners are usually disputed — and that's before we get to the controversy over the televised show. Of course, social media has only inflamed and made these arguments even more ferocious.

The 91st Academy Awards has already got one thing right, though, by handing out nominations to "Avengers: Infinity War" and "Black Panther," the two most successful films at the 2018 box office.

OK, "Black Panther" is doing most of the heavy lifting with its nine nominations, which includes it being the first-ever superhero film to be nominated for a Best Picture Oscar, compared to "Avengers: Infinity War"'s solitary Visual Effects nod.

But the Academy Awards' decision to recognize these Marvel behemoths proves that the Oscars are finally starting to appreciate the genre that has long dominated Hollywood and the worldwide box office. The Russo Brothers, who directed "Avengers: Infinity War," clearly believe that the recognition is overdue and the Academy had no choice but to finally acknowledge these blockbusters.

"It is like a lot of things in society right now with these movies. There are a lot of warring ideas about what stories speak to what people and how they're executed and what is 'the best execution.' But I think all of that is evolving," Joe Russo tells Metro. "I think these movies speak to a younger audience. I think these movies speak to a very wide audience. I think the momentum behind them and what the audience sees as the standard of great storytelling is being redefined through these films. I do think that this was a watershed moment. Certainly Nolan's 'Dark Knight' set the table for all of us. But 'Black Panther' and us getting nominations certainly illustrates that we are now moving in a different direction."

"Avengers: Infinity War" will face off against "Christopher Robin," "First Man," "Ready Player One" and "Solo: A Star Wars Story," while "Black Panther" is currently the fifth-favorite for its Best Picture accolade, ahead of "Bohemian Rhapsody," "Vice" and "A Star Is Born" but behind "The Favourite," "BlacKkKlansman," "Green Book" and "Roma."

That's hardly surprising. Christoper Nolan's "The Dark Knight" is one of only a handful of films based on a comic book to have won an Academy Award, with Heath Ledger posthumously picking up the Best Supporting Actor and Richard King claiming the Best Achievement in Sound Editing Oscars. The others include "Big Hero 6" (Best Animated Feature Film), "Batman" (Art Direction), "Spider-Man 2" (Visual Effects) and "Superman" (Special Achievement Award).

But while the Russo Brothers would obviously be overjoyed if Dan DeLeeuw, Kelly Port, Russell Earl and Dan Sudick picked up the Oscar for Best Visual Effects, Anthony is also quick to insist, "We're all very pleased with the movie. So to a large degree we've already gotten our satisfaction." That's exactly what $2 billion at the box office and a score of 85 percent on Rotten Tomatoes will do.

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Why is 'Green Book' so controversial?

Here are the problems with the Best Picture Oscar nominee.

GREGORY WAKEMAN

Controversy has surrounded "Green Book" throughout awards season. UNIVERSAL PICTURES

"Green Book" has somehow rivaled "Bohemian Rhapsody" as the most controversial 2019 Best Picture Oscar nominee.

After premiering at the Toronto International Film Festival, "Green Book" quickly won the festival's People's Choice Award. It followed that up with successes at the Producers Guild of America and Golden Globes. It was also named one of the best films of 2018 by the National Board Of Review and the American Film Institute.

They were clearly enamored with "Green Book"'s somewhat true story of Italian-American bouncer Tony Lip (Viggo Mortensen) driving African-American musician Don Shirley (Mahershala Ali) across the south of the United States during the early 1960s. That's understandable, as "Green Book" is funny, propelled by two outstanding performances, and grows and grows to be a bona-fide crowd-pleaser.

But, at its core, the film feels dated. Not only have we seen it all before, which is why the film has constantly been compared to "Driving Miss Daisy," but once again a film about racial inequality, segregation and bigotry is shown from the perspective of a white man. It was directed by one, too, in the shape of Peter Farrelly, and written by three, including Farrelly, Brian Hayes Currie and Nick Vallelonga, the son of Mortensen's character.

But after excelling at festivals, "Green Book" was criticized by film journalists when it was finally released. Indiewire wrote that it had a "Magical Negro problem," insisting Mahershala Ali's Shirley only exists to "help a white man overcome his problems." The Root described it as "palatable racism for White People," while Vulture decreed that "Get Out" had changed the expectations and standards for films on racism.

The cast and crew then started adding to the issues. Mortensen used the N-word during a Q&A. Farrelly apologized after it was revealed he had a history of flashing his penis while working. Then an anti-Muslim tweet from Vallelonga reemerged.

Throughout all of this, Shirley's family have distanced themselves from "Green Book," insisting the musician denied Vallelonga permission to make the film up until his death in April 2013. They even called it a "symphony of lies."

As more members of Shirley's family revealed their disdain for the film, Ali issued an apology, telling Shirley's nephew Edwin, "If I have offended you, I am so, so terribly sorry. I was not aware that there were close relatives with whom I could have consulted to add some nuance to the character."

We'll find out if all of the above have done enough to derail "Green Book"'s Oscar bid on Sunday night.

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'I wanted to play a man with complexes and weaknesses' Viggo Mortensen

Metro chatted with the Danish-American actor about the comedy-drama film "Green Book," which received five nominations for the 91st Academy Awards. YULIA KALANTAROVA, MWN

You have already lost so much weight after the shooting!
Yes, gaining weight was much easier and more fun, believe me.

During filming, you also had a lot to eat? Everything was real?
Well, of course, you saw everything. But the food was good, so it would be a sin to complain. On big filming days I just was missing breakfast and even lunch. All these fried chickens and hot dogs do their job.

Director Peter Farrelly has said he had a hard time convincing you to do this film, since he is known more as a director of comedies such as "Dumb and Dumber."
He is clearly being modest! It is more likely he wanted to prove something to himself. Of course, there is always a risk — after all, this is the first drama in his career with elements of comedy, and not vice versa. But why not? Peter is a very serious and thoughtful person. We spent a lot of time discussing my role. I was afraid to make a stereotypical image of a rude Italian-American. But I wanted to play a man with complexes and weaknesses. The film is based on real events, and in the script the main characters are also spelled out as real people. They sincerely and openly say what they think. All the comedic moments came up from the usual everyday situations.

Did you have a feeling that, now, when nationalism and racism are gaining strength again, this was the right moment for this story?

"WE ARE ALWAYS AFRAID AND WARY OF WHAT WE DON'T KNOW OR DON'T UNDERSTAND."

I believe that all that is in our nature, maybe even since the days of the caveman. After all, we are always afraid and wary of what we don't know or don't understand. And every new generation steps on the same rake. Progress and education have nothing to do with it. Even the most respected Harvard professor, for example, can still remain an ignorant person. Namely ignorance and misunderstanding give rise to distrust and prejudice. So, this story is timeless, and it could happen anytime.

In a previous interview about the film, you said that your character Frank "Tony Lip" Vallelonga reminded you of your father. Why is that?
My father also loved telling stories and could convince anyone of anything. I have heard many family stories about him since childhood, but over time they evolved and changed a lot. But at the same time, they sounded so convincing.

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Visit Florida: St. Pete Beach

From the Don CeSar hotel to the Florida Aquarium, we show you why St. Pete Beach should be on the top of your list for your next vacation.

Ready for a break? Kick back on the sandy white beaches of St. Pete, as the balmy waters of the Gulf of Mexico lap at your toes. With an average of 361 days of sunshine per year, St. Pete Beach is guaranteed to please. A Pinellas County destination and home of award-winning beaches, St. Pete Beach is where you can find the architecturally and historically grand Don CeSar resort.

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Situated on the sugary white sands of the Gulf of Mexico, the Don CeSar Hotel was built in the "Great Gatsby" era of the 1920s. Listed among the Historic Hotels of North America and the National Register of Historic Places, the resort features 277 luxurious rooms, including 40 spacious suites.

The Don CeSar has been hosting families from around the world for decades. Notable guests throughout history have included American author F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda; baseball great Lou Gehrig; and mafia gangster Al Capone. Ready to plan your own family vacation? Here are four ways to have the most relaxing vacation you can imagine at the Pink Palace:

1 Toast to a little romance while you're on vacation and kick back in one of the lounge chairs on the white sand beach.

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3 Indulge your sweet tooth at Uncle Andy's Ice Cream Parlor. This old-fashioned ice cream shop offers yummy banana splits and strawberry shakes that are homemade and deliciously authentic.

4 Watch one of Florida's beautiful Gulf Coast sunsets.

The Don CeSar Hotel is located at 3400 Gulf Blvd. on St. Pete Beach. For more info, visit doncesar.com.

The Florida Aquarium

Rated one of the top five kid-friendly aquariums by Parents magazine, the Florida Aquarium in Tampa features more than 20,000 aquatic plants and animals, both native to Florida and from around the world. The Penguins Backstage Pass Experience offers a 30-minute experience with birds and biologists. The staff and their educational programs have reached more than 1 million children, and preservation efforts aim to make sure bay area sea life will be around for future generations. But beyond all that, the Florida Aquarium was designed to deliver fun, with play areas for the kids and interesting, engaging presentations.

This article was written in partnership with VisitFlorida.

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Hammer these Phillies prop bets

Look for Rhys Hoskins to increase his home run total in 2019.

MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

GETTY IMAGES

The Phillies currently have 14/1 odds to win the World Series and those odds will surely surge if the Phils ever get around to signing Bryce Harper.

Even if the Harper signing doesn't come to fruition in Philadelphia, the Phillies already have several players that should challenge for major awards and titles. Here are some player-specific betting props for 2019 (odds courtesy of Westgate Superbook Las Vegas).

Rhys Hoskins belted 34 homers in his first full MLB season last year, but jumping up to around 47 or 48 homers (which is where MLB home run kings have landed on average the past few years) is a tall order. Hoskins increasing his home run total by five or six this year is more than doable, though, so take a look at his regular-season over-under of 34.5.

ODDS TO WIN MLB HOME RUN TITLE
Rhys Hoskins 30/1
Carlos Santana 100/1
Maikel Franco 100/1
Andrew McCutchen 200/1
Nick Williams 200/1
Odubel Herrera 300/1
J.T. Realmuto 300/1

REGULAR SEASON HOME RUNS - OVER/UNDER
Rhys Hoskins 34.5
Andrew McCutchen 24.5
J.T. Realmuto 22.5
Jean Segura 14.5

REGULAR SEASON PITCHING WINS - OVER/UNDER
Aaron Nola 14.5
Jake Arrieta 10.5
Nick Pivetta 9.5

MLB REGULAR SEASON-MOST PITCHING WINS
Aaron Nola 30/1
Jake Arrieta 100/1
Nick Pivetta 100/1
Vince Velasquez 300/1

And here are some team-specific props. A tasty bet here is over-under regular-season wins at 86.5. If you think the Phillies are a playoff team, hammer the over. Every division winner and wild card team in baseball last year went over 90 wins. Three teams even went over 100 wins.

ODDS TO WIN NL EAST
Philadelphia Phillies 11/4

WILL THE PHILLIES MAKE THE 2019 PLAYOFFS?
Yes +170
No -200

REGULAR SEASON TEAM WINS - OVER/UNDER
Philadelphia Phillies 86.5

ODDS TO HAVE THE MOST TEAM WINS IN MLB
Philadelphia Phillies 25/1

TWEET OF THE DAY

Clay Travis
@ClayTravis

I think this is correct. NBA without LeBron will be like NBA was after Jordan. Total interest collapse. Even still, NFL looks at way ESPN constantly fluffs NBA and asks why they don't get the same coverage. I'd be asking same thing if I ran NFL.

GETTY IMAGES

Sports betting 101:
Sample size issues in the AAF

VSiN

Week 2 of action in the Alliance of American Football brought more clarity about overall team quality, and further highlighted the difficulties that poorly prepared offenses would have moving the ball.

If you're betting Week 3 of the AAF Saturday and Sunday, be sure you dig beyond recent final scores to look at key game stats. You don't want to bet on underdogs just because "the line seems a little high" or try to anticipate "when Overs are going to start hitting."

Six of eight games have stayed Under so far. Overs won't start hitting until more offenses can move the ball!

A quick recap from last week:

Birmingham (-7.5) only beat Salt Lake 12-9, losing total yardage 256-216 and yards-per-play 3.9 to 3.4. It took a fumble return TD to steal the outright victory. Birmingham only has one scoring drive longer than 60 yards this season, and that was for a field goal.

Arizona (-16) only beat Memphis 20-18, but dominated yardage 383-236 and yards-per-play 6.4 to 3.5.

Orlando (-5) won at San Antonio 37-29 in the most entertaining game of the week. Orlando looks to be the class of the league, winning yardage here 428-398 and yards-per-play 8.4 to 5.1. San Antonio is the best AAF team at moving the chains, converting 12 of 19 third down after 9 of 18 in its opener.

San Diego (-9) beat Atlanta 24-12, winning total yardage 313-222 on 4.5 to 4.2 yards-per-play. Huge game on the ground for the home favorite, which might mean trouble vs. better rush defenses.

Sample size issues make season-to-date team stats tough to trust. But it's already clear that Orlando and Arizona are top championship threats, while Memphis and Atlanta are way behind the field. San Antonio (may be strong when not playing Orlando), Birmingham (great defense, struggling offense), San Diego (poor pass offense) and Salt Lake (ugly stats, but in two road games) still have to sort themselves out.

This week's matchups: Arizona at Salt Lake` (B/R Live, Saturday 3 p.m.), Memphis at Orlando (NFL Network, Saturday 8 p.m.), Birmingham at Atlanta (CBS Sports Network, Sunday 4 p.m.) and San Diego at San Diego (NFL Network, Sunday 8 p.m.). JEFF FOGLE

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In partnership with VSiN

WGC Mexico Championship betting preview

The Tour heads down to Mexico City.

BRADY KANNON

Brady Kannon is a former Hilton SuperContest champion and is VSiN's golf betting expert.

The West Coast Swing on the 2019 PGA Tour schedule is complete and prior to kicking off the Florida Swing, we take a trip down to Mexico City and Club de Golf Chapultepec for the first World Golf Championship of the season. This is the third trip to Chapultepec, a seven-year agreement between The Tour and the venue, that will have the championship being played here through 2023.

The championship features a limited field of basically the top 72 players in the world rankings and there is no 36-hole cut. Automatic qualifiers; Justin Rose, Jason Day, Adam Scott and J.B. Holmes have decided not to attend, while Adam Hadwin, Si Woo Kim and Brandt Snedeker have turned down invitations to compete. And it is worth noting, Tiger Woods is playing this week. It will be his first time playing the course.

The golf course is a tree-lined Par 71 that has been around for over 90 years. It stretches to 7,345 yards in length but it will play much shorter than that because we are at elevation this week of over 7,500 feet.

A favorite, two contenders and a long shot

JUSTIN THOMAS (10-1)
Thomas was second here last year, losing in a playoff to Phil Mickelson, and was fifth in 2017. He finished second last week at Riviera. He leads The Tour in Strokes Gained: Approach, is 38th in Strokes Gained: Putting, and 62nd in Scrambling. It's a short price but it may not be short enough as he is emerging as a real horse for this course. Coming off of a disappointing Sunday at Riviera, I expect him to bounce back and contend yet again.

MARC LEISHMAN (30-1)
Being from Australia, Leishman is very familiar with Kikuyu and Poa Annua and it showed up last week with his fourth place finish at Riviera. And it was at Riviera where we saw his short game flourish. For the week, he was fourth in Strokes Gained: Approach and 10th in Strokes Gained: Putting.

GETTY IMAGES

He ranks fifth and 16th in those categories on Tour, respectively, and is also fifth in Scrambling.

WEBB SIMPSON (30-1)
This will be Simpson's second time playing here after finishing 37th last year. He is second on Tour in Strokes Gained: Approach, 69th in Putting, and fourth in Scrambling. He already has two top 10 finishes this season and six straight top 20s. He also comes in off of two weeks' rest.

KEVIN KISNER (100-1)
Kisner took 11th in his debut at Chapultepec and finished 29th last year. He comes in off of two straight top 30 finishes and a week of rest after skipping Riviera. His strength has always been the short game, ranking 45th on Tour in Scrambling and 37th in Strokes Gained: Putting. In a field of just 72 players, one of the best short games in the world, at a course that demands such, he would seem to have a better chance than 100-1.

Sports on TV Highlights

7:00 pm	**NBA Basketball** Miami Heat vs. Philadelphia 76ers	NBC Sports Philadelphia +
7:30 pm	**NHL Hockey** Philadelphia Flyers vs. Montreal Canadiens	NBC Sports Philadelphia
7:00 pm	**Men's CBB** Michigan Wolverines vs. Minnesota Golden Gophers	ESPN
8:00 pm	**NBA Basketball** Boston Celtics vs. Milwaukee Bucks	TNT
8:00 pm	**NHL Hockey** Los Angeles Kings vs. Nashville Predators	NBC Sports Network
10:30 pm	**NBA Basketball** Houston Rockets vs. Los Angeles Lakers	TNT

Flyers and Sixers
Thursday betting preview

MetroBet takes a look at the two Philadelphia teams in action tonight as the Flyers face the Canadiens up north and the Sixers return from the All-Star break to host the Heat.

Philadelphia Flyers at Montreal Canadiens
Despite a 5-2 loss to the Lightning on Tuesday night, the Flyers (28-25-7) remain one of the NHL's hottest teams at 12-3 in their last 15 contests. The Canadiens (32-21-7), meanwhile, only just snapped a four-game losing streak with a 3-2 win over the Blue Jackets. Philly has gone below the total in six straight after allowing five or more goals in their previous game. Also, the Under is 10-4 in the Flyers' last 14 games outside the Wells Fargo Center.
The play: Canadiens -145

Miami Heat at Philadelphia 76ers (-9)
The finale of a six-game road trip for the Heat (26-30) takes place in their first game back from the All-Star break as they visit the 76ers (37-21) on Thursday. The Heat are 2-3 straight-up so far on the trip but 3-2 against the spread.

The Sixers went into the break averaging 120.4 points over their last five contests, but Miami's stingy defense (second in the NBA at 105.7 points allowed per tilt) should keep Joel Embiid and company in check. The trends suggest that the Heat have a significant advantage with extra rest under their belts. They are 6-2 against the spread in their last eight games, playing on three or more days of rest. Miami has also covered in 15 of its last 22 road games.
The play: Heat +9
ROBERT CRISCOLA

VSiN DAILY LINE

NBA

MIAMI HEAT VS. PHILADELPHIA 76ERS -10

BOSTON CELTICS VS. MILWAUKEE BUCKS -5.5

HOUSTON ROCKETS -2.5 VS. LOS ANGELES LAKERS

NHL

PHILADELPHIA FLYERS +165 VS. MONTREAL CANADIENS -145

LOS ANGELES KINGS +220 VS. NASHVILLE PREDATORS -200

MEN'S CBB

MICHIGAN WOLVERINES -4.5 VS. MINN GOLDEN GOPHERS

OREGON DUCKS VS. USC TROJANS -3.5

3 Things to watch for post-All-Star break

With 24 games left in the regular season, Sixers are trying to obtain a top three playoff seed in the Eastern Conference.

JOVAN ALFORD
jovan.alford@metro.us

As the Sixers prepare to kick off the second half of their season, Metro takes a look at what to watch for as Ben Simmons (left), Joel Embiid (right) and company look to make a Finals push. GETTY IMAGES

With NBA All-Star weekend in the rearview mirror, it is time for the Philadelphia 76ers and other teams to make a push toward the playoffs. The Sixers (37-21), who are currently tied for fourth place in the Eastern Conference with the Boston Celtics, will take on the Miami Heat tonight at the Wells Fargo Center.

After their tilt with the Heat, the Sixers' next four games are against the Portland Trail Blazers (home), New Orleans Pelicans (away), Golden State Warriors (home) and Orlando Magic (home). At best, Philly needs to go 3-2 to create some type of separation between themselves, the Celtics and Indiana Pacers, who currently hold the third seed.

Nevertheless, it will be up to Sixers head coach Brett Brown to have his guys ready to go down the stretch. There is no reason why this team cannot make a deep playoff run with the talent they have accumulated this season alone.

Here are three things to watch out for post-All-Star break from the Sixers.

1. STARTING LINEUP CONTINUING TO GEL

Leading up to the All-Star break, we saw how potent the Sixers' new starting lineup could be. Against the Denver Nuggets, the starters scored 97 of the team's 117 points and sported an offensive rating (ORtg) of 118.8.

Then, against the Los Angeles Lakers a couple of days later, the Sixers' starting lineup scored 103 points and had a ridiculous ORtg of 137 and defensive rating (DRtg) of 113.8. There are not many teams in the NBA that can get that much productivity from their starting lineup in two consecutive games, outside of the Golden State Warriors.

In fact, the starting lineup of Joel Embiid, Tobias Harris, Jimmy Butler, J.J. Redick and Ben Simmons is averaging +26.6 points in 72 minutes, which is much better than the previous lineup with Wilson Chandler (+11.8 points in 293 minutes).

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from the Sixers

The Sixers' starting lineup should be able to get them early leads, however it will be up to the bench to fold down the fort.

2. WHO STEPS UP OFF THE BENCH?

After last Tuesday's disappointing loss to the Celtics, many fans were wondering what happened to Jonah Bolden and James Ennis. Bolden, the rookie from Australia, has played well in spurts this season, providing the Sixers with a rim protector and stretch forward.

Ennis, however, was recently acquired at the deadline from the Houston Rockets and played pretty well against the Nuggets in his Sixers debut. But for some reason, Brett Brown wanted to experiment with the rotation, giving minutes to Boban Marjanovic and Furkan Korkmaz instead of those guys.

Jimmy Butler. GETTY IMAGES

While this is not an issue in the regular season, Brown will eventually have to commit to a firm 8-10-man rotation in the playoffs.

We already know that T.J. McConnell will serve as the team's primary backup point guard, with Mike Scott and Jonathon Simmons playing a considerable amount of minutes off the bench.

Therefore, whom will the last couple of spots go to? Only time will tell, but Bolden and Ennis need to be playing more, especially with what they can bring to the table defensively.

3. A RETURN FROM ZHAIRE SMITH?

Even though Smith has not played a single minute of regular-season basketball yet, it seems that the rookie from Texas Tech could be making his debut sooner than later.

Smith missed all of training camp and most of this season due to a broken foot and food allergy. However, he has taken strides in his rehab and conditioning, spending time with the Delaware Blue Coats (Sixers' G-League affiliate).

It should be interesting to see how Smith looks in his first NBA G-League game and eventually his first NBA game. We already know that he has the tools and skills to be a tremendous defender in the NBA; it is just a matter of how his offensive game comes along.

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Should the Eagles consider AB?

Antonio Brown will be the crown jewel of the NFL trade block. GETTY IMAGES

Earlier this season, there were a lot of discussions surrounding the Philadelphia Eagles and if they were going to try to acquire disgruntled Pittsburgh Steelers running back Le'Veon Bell at the NFL trade deadline.

While the rumors continued to float about the two parties, nothing came from it as the Eagles decided to not trade for the talented running back and instead acquired veteran wide receiver Golden Tate III from the Detroit Lions.

However, there is now another player in the Steel City who will more than likely be playing elsewhere next season.

ESPN's Adam Schefter reported on Tuesday that All-Pro wide receiver Antonio Brown, along with his agent Drew Rosenhaus, met with the Steelers' front office brass and agreed that a trade would be the best for everybody involved.

It does not come as a surprise to see both sides come to this decision, especially with the pressure Brown has applied to the Steelers publicly on social media.

When it comes to trading him, the Steelers will do what is best for the organization. According to Jeremy Fowler of ESPN, Pittsburgh will reportedly be patient with any deal and will want a high draft pick in return for the superstar wide receiver.

If this is the case, one team who could throw their proverbial hat into the ring is the Eagles.

Philadelphia has nine picks in the 2019 NFL Draft and could package a player or two to send to the Steelers in exchange for the talented Brown.

If they were to trade for Brown, the Eagles would definitely have to give up slot wide receiver Nelson Agholor, who is scheduled to make $9.4 million next season.

They would also have to give up one of their second-round picks and possibly another player such as cornerback Rasul Douglas.

It's a steep price, but Brown has had six consecutive seasons with 100 receptions and 1,000 receiving yards.

Last season, Brown had a career-high 15 touchdowns to go along with 1,297 yards on 104 receptions (168 targets). Could you imagine him playing opposite of Alshon Jeffery with Zach Ertz flanking him down the seam? It would make quarterback Carson Wentz's life easier and the Eagles offense that much more explosive.

However, there should be some "buyer beware" when it comes to Brown, because of his age and having cap hits over the next three seasons of $22 million, $18 million and $19 million. That would be a lot of money tied up into an aging wide receiver while trying to pay your franchise quarterback and other guys on the 53-man roster.

JOVAN ALFORD

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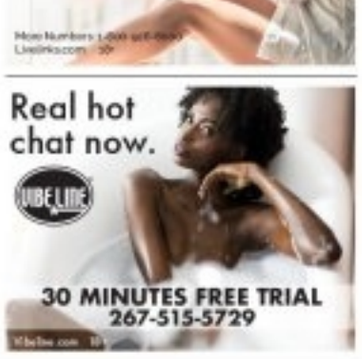

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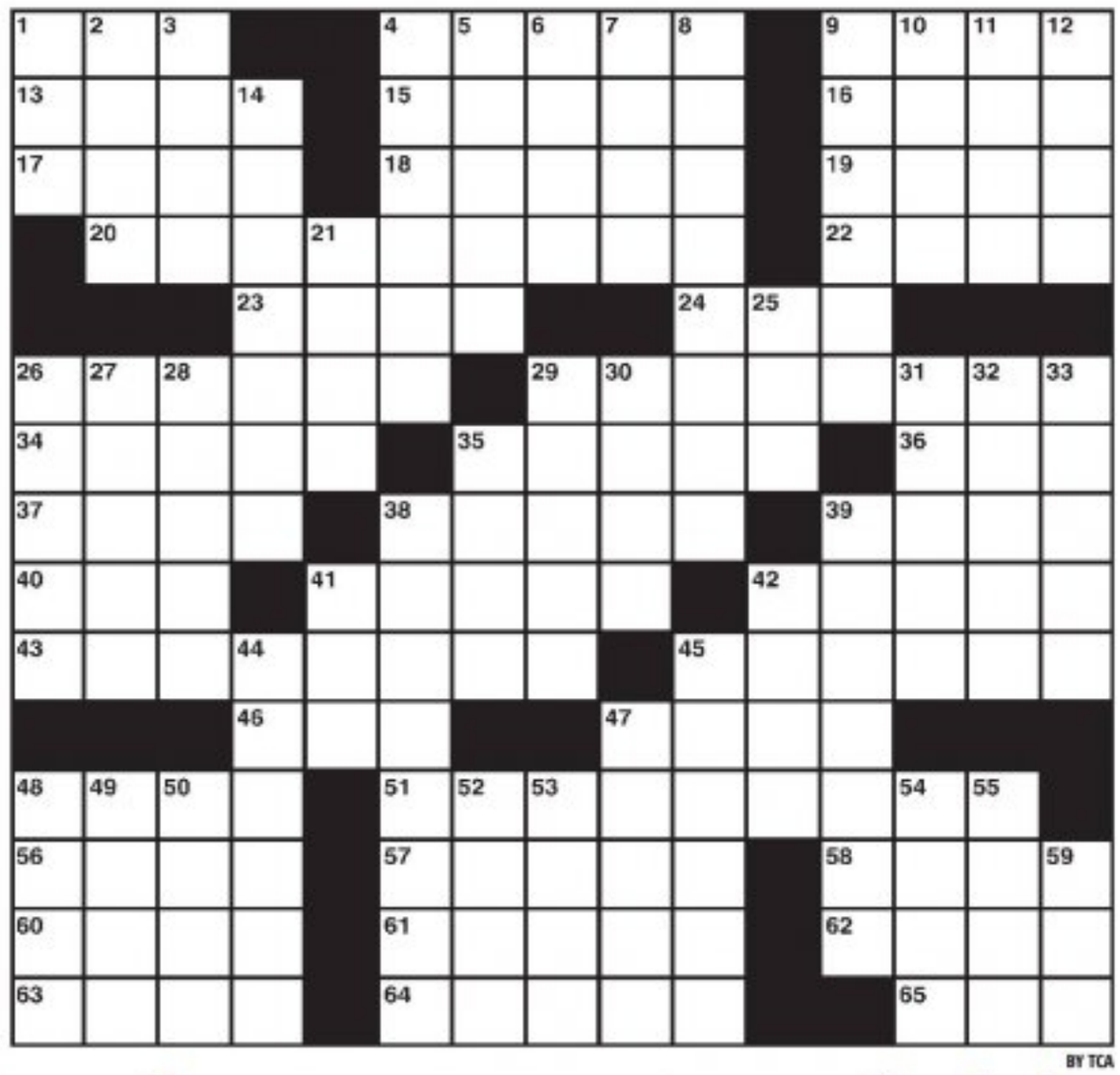

ACROSS

1 Speedometer letters
4 Underneath
9 Run-in
13 Pore over
15 Popeye's love
16 Additionally
17 Rescue
18 Judge's mallet
19 Deadly creatures
20 La-Z-Boys
22 __ up; confesses
23 Committed perjury
24 Weather forecast
26 Indian & Arctic
29 Short negligee
34 Dangerous fish
35 Court event
36 Lowe or Estes
37 Didn't __ for; disliked
38 Grieve
39 City in Texas
40 Toward a ship's stern
41 City in England
42 Hell's ruler
43 Practice
45 Scarcely
46 CBS competitor
47 Part of the leg
48 Hopping insect
51 Crucial
56 Sandy soil
57 Banquet
58 Derriere
60 Monster
61 Bring together
62 __ other; one another
63 No longer sick
64 Of the moon
65 Fight result, for short

DOWN

1 Married woman, for short
2 "...and a partridge in a __ tree"
3 "__ I got news for you!"
4 Namesakes of Bacall's love
5 African antelope
6 "__ and Let Die"; 007 film
7 Take __; assume control
8 Cardiff resident
9 Wooden shoes
10 Farm machine
11 As strong __ ox
12 Throw
14 State openly
21 Piece of a chain
25 Wesson product
26 Boxer De La Hoya
27 Rub enough to make sore
28 One of the planets
29 Vulgar
30 Broadcasts
31 Give a speech
32 __ yokel; small-town resident
33 Blackish wood
35 Ballerina's support
38 Compassionate
39 Armed conflict
41 Scientist's workplace
42 __ and pepper
44 Tooth coating
45 Exchange goods
47 __ Rica
48 Move along smoothly
49 Theater box
50 British noble
52 List of dishes
53 Agony
54 __ as a pin
55 __ on; attach to
59 Fraternity letter

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M	X	Z	A	H	A	R	R	Y	T
A	L	A	N	U	B	E	A	T	X
R	R	J	D	U	T	B	R	U	R
V	F	N	R	T	U	U	I	R	A
I	D	F	O	G	J	R	C	P	U
N	U	P	I	U	A	G	K	I	S
I	H	Z	D	R	V	L	M	N	E
B	D	G	D	I	E	H	A	R	D
O	E	W	D	O	O	H	N	X	G
R	G	H	Q	F	I	H	S	F	Y

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O	F	R	A
R	D	E	M

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9			4				2	
	4		2			5		
	5				7		4	3
		7				2		
4	3		9				8	
		5			1		3	
	2				3			1
3			7	2		9	6	5

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A	N	D	Y	■	L	I	T	T	L	E	R	O	C	K
P	O	I	■	D	A	N	E	S	■	L	I	T	H	E
■	■	T	W	I	N	E	■	■	D	E	F	■	■	■
C	L	I	E	N	T	■	■	D	E	C	E	I	T	■
R	I	O	T	S	■	C	H	E	A	T	■	M	O	B
I	N	N	S	■	S	H	E	A	F	■	S	P	U	R
B	E	A	■	G	O	U	R	D	■	T	E	R	R	A
■	S	L	A	L	O	M	■	■	H	O	N	E	S	T
■	■	■	B	A	N	■	■	B	O	N	D	S	■	■
O	S	C	A	R	■	G	R	A	M	S	■	S	I	R
W	H	I	T	E	H	O	U	S	E	■	R	I	C	A
N	O	T	E	■	A	N	G	E	L	■	O	V	E	N
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